

Citizens Petitions to Amend the Acton PCRC Zoning Bylaw

Article 42 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC

Article 43 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC

Zoning for different housing projects:

- Planned Conservation Residential Community (PCRC)
- Standard subdivision
- And others



If passed, this article would:

- remove “wetlands” from the calculation of the # of new houses allowed in a PCRC
- protect more land
- still encourage clustering

What is a wetland?

“Wetlands are land areas that contain surface water all or part of the time, as well as some adjacent land areas.”



Source: Mass Association of Conservation Commissioners

Article 42 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC

This change, if passed would remove wetlands from the calculation relative to how many house can be built

We, the undersigned, formally request a binding warrant article to be placed on the 2022 Town Meeting Warrant for Acton Town Meeting:

Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC 9.6.2.3 Number of DWELLING UNITS

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 9.6.2.3 Number of DWELLING UNITS, of the Zoning Bylaw as set forth below:

Change:

"The maximum number of DWELLING UNITS permitted in a PCRC shall be 80% of the following, rounded up to the next integer:"

To:

"The maximum number of DWELLING UNITS permitted in a PCRC shall be 80% of the following, after removing wetlands from the calculation, rounded up to the next integer:"

Summary: This article, if approved, would close a loop hole in the Acton Zoning Bylaw, which allows developers to build more houses by including wetlands in the calculation of how many houses they can build on a lot.

Article 43 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC

This would also remove wetlands from the calculation.
This is alternative language based on input from the Town.
If both passed. they would not be contradictory.

We, the undersigned, formally request the following binding warrant article to be placed on the 2022 Town Meeting Warrant for Acton Town Meeting:

Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC 9.6.2.3 Number of DWELLING UNITS

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Acton Zoning Bylaw by:

Adding a new definition to Section 1.3:

“PCRC TRACT OF LAND : For PCRCs, a PCRC TRACT OF LAND shall be an area of land consisting of a single LOT or of several contiguous LOTS which shall be calculated by subtracting wetlands from the Total TRACT OF LAND.”;

And by changing all uses of the phrase “TRACT OF LAND” in Section 9.6.2.3 Number of DWELLING UNITS, from “TRACT OF LAND” to “PCRC TRACT OF LAND”.

What does this all mean?

Here is a simple example of what is possible while Wetlands are included in the PCRC calculation



Developer buys an
Acre lot in R2 district

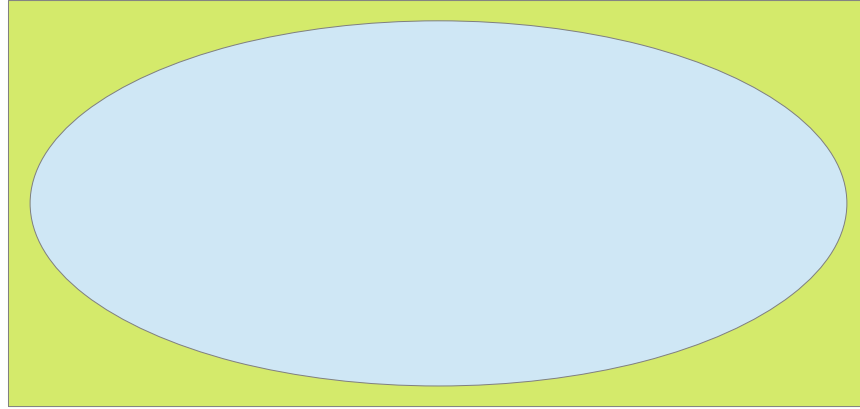
Max 2-3 houses

Developer
buys 1 acre lot

Can fit 2-3 houses



+



Developer buys 7 acre parcel
w/pond to meet PCRC
minimum acreage

Now the developer has 8 acres and can build
14 houses on the combined parcels

We expect this more and more as developers run out of upland

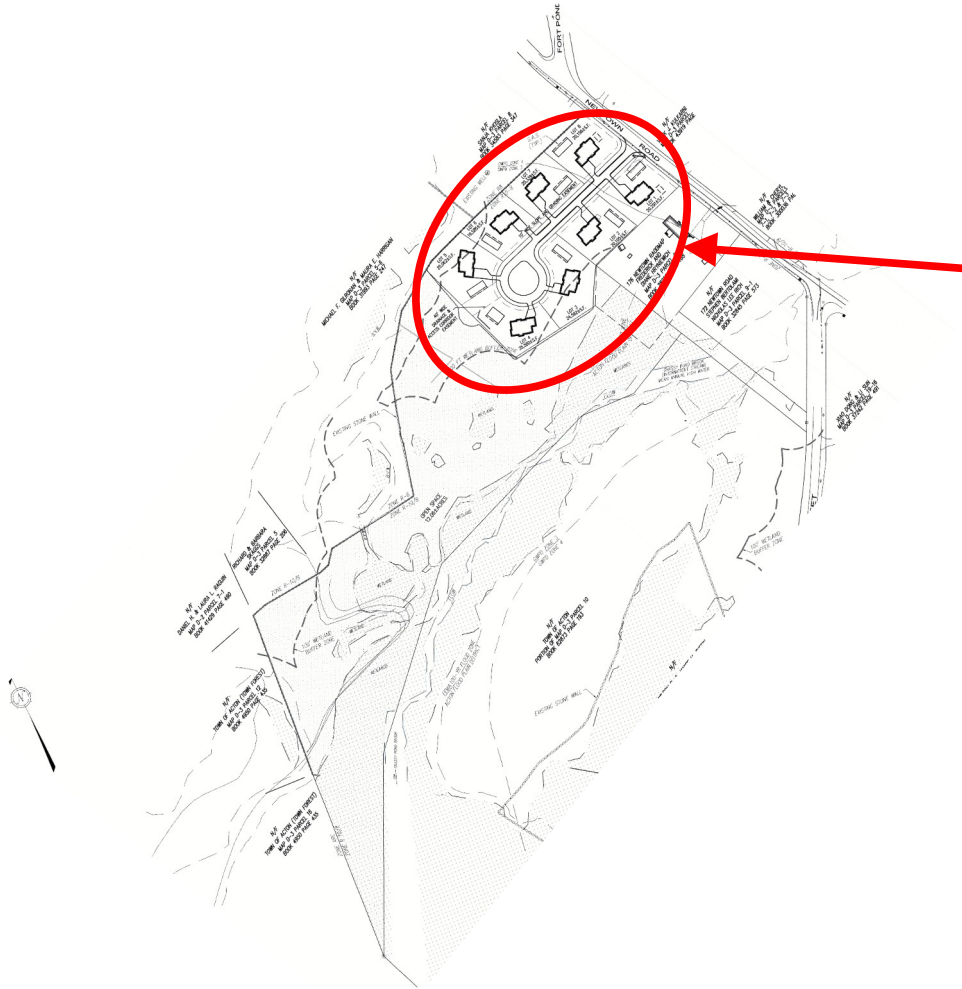
Why will PCRC still be used to cluster?

A standard subdivision requires:

- large streets
- significant “frontage” along the street

*PCRC allows **smaller common drives**, does not require frontage, and will still allow more houses than a standard subdivision*

*And more houses =
economic incentive to cluster*

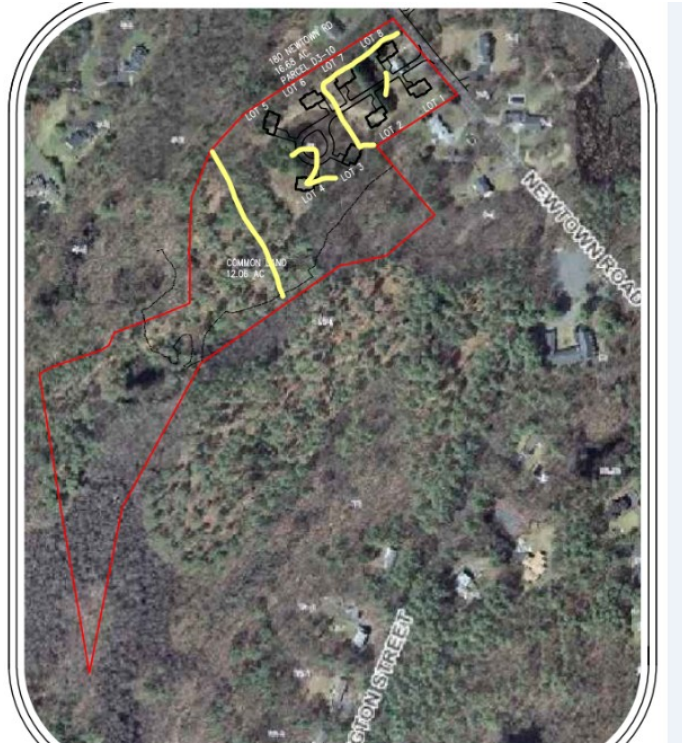


In the 180 Newtown project,
including the wetlands,
8 new PCRC houses allowed

Excluding wetlands –
max 5 houses
(or possibly fewer)

A standard subdivision –
max 2

Standard Subdivision = 2 houses



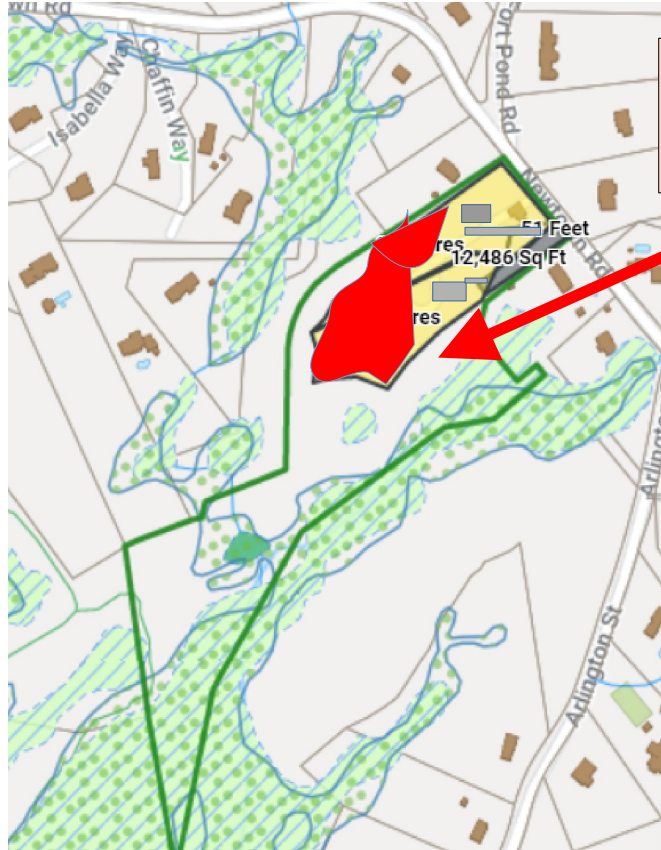
180 Newtown

PCRC = 8 houses

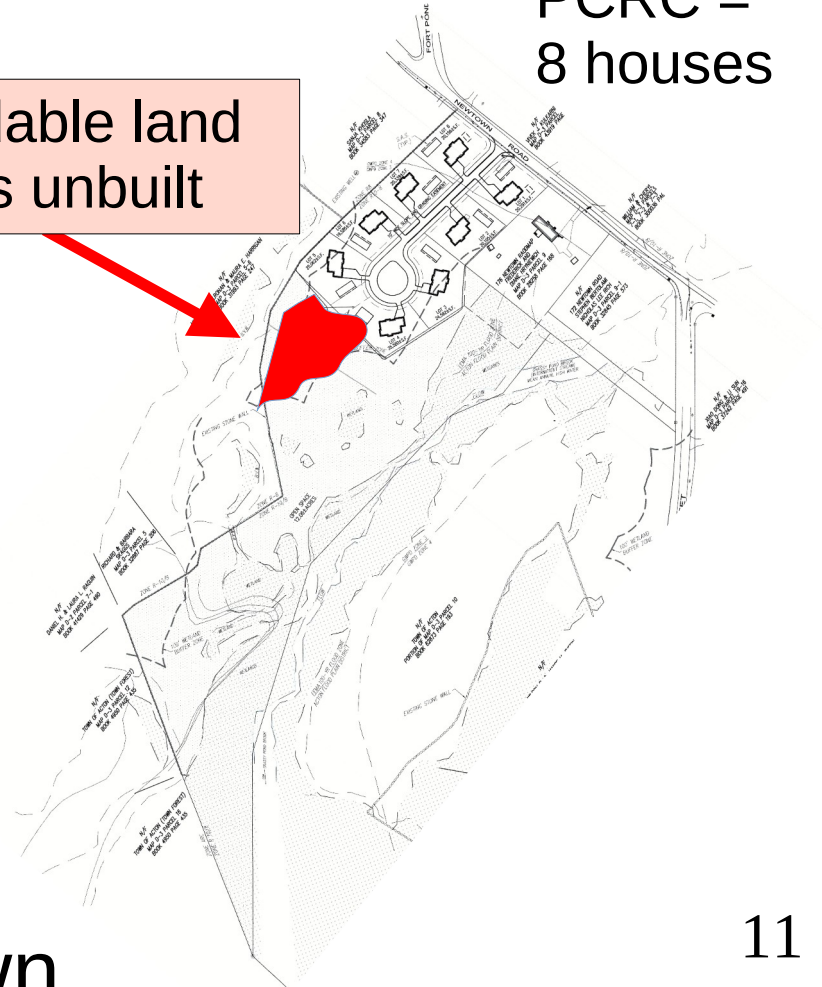


Standard Subdivision = 2 houses

PCRC =
8 houses



Unbuildable land
remains unbuilt



180 Newtown

Article 42 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC
Article 43 # Amend Zoning Bylaw – PCRC

To remove wetlands
from the
PCRC calculation



“If you can’t build on it you shouldn’t count it”

To preserve more land...

Please



VOTE
YES